

Piles of Birthdays It goes like this: You wake up, you put the kettle on, you drink your coffee. You tiptoe in the dark. You take the bus. You go to work. You go home. You make dinner. You sit together. You ask about your day. You eat popcorn. You tell stories. You laugh. You go to sleep. You wake up, you put the kettle on. You drink your coffee. You sneak around, you take the bus, you go to work, you take the bus, and you make dinner. You sit together. You ask about your day. You share sweets. Put the TV on. Go to sleep. Every day. But, of course, each day is different than the one before. The TV goes on earlier. You forget to say goodnight. Some days you fight. Or meet someone new at work. Some days you won't listen or you don't want to. Some days you'll feel so full, you can't breath and some days you'll feel so forgotten you won't sleep. But you keep waking up, putting the kettle on, coming home, making dinner. Sitting together. It doesn't happen from Monday to Friday, but from Januaries to Junes. From the piles of birthday parties and burnt rice and missed phone calls, all of the things that keep you together get chipped away at by all of the things that you, that we all, do. Just by living life. And it will lie there in all its terrible little pieces. Looking up at you, saying, see! Look what you've done! But you can't. And you will have spent so much time on the chipping that you can't even imagine putting such a well-crafted disaster in the bin. So you wake up and put the kettle on.

Light Little Thing Riding the train at night reminds me of when we sat together on the way to the sea. And also that next day when you stood, pressed into a corner, telling me that you had always dreamt of becoming a rabbit as a child. And I think about how in Albania, in a foggy mirror, we shared a toothbrush. And in Vienna we stacked dishes, leaving spaghetti sauce on a makeshift table of chairs and boards. And that night in Mexico, when I forgot to bring the map, we stayed up talking instead--and I wonder sometimes, when we're sitting quiet, like we are now, that there is too much between us to have much left to say. But I can see you, hair unwashed, feet kicked up on the couch reading out loud while I play piano. Light little thing putting weight into me. And you're checking your phone and I'm counting lights. My lips aren't moving, but I'm still saying: we could keep going--if you want. Because shoulder to shoulder, in metal and glass/ your laugh, for a moment, sings very close to the music of what happens. Our train pulls into the last station, and at the beginning of our walk home, we are as different as we are the same.

Being Both You stand by the window, lighting a Parisienne. The light is out and we are in our kitchen. I can see your breath. I hold my knees, leaning against the wall. Your hair looks like my socks: black and ash and gray. I take pictures without a camera and all the breakable bits stay mine. It's Tuesday. It's everyone's Tuesday and it's not everyone's Tuesday. It's our Tuesday. And we are dust and we are not dust. And we are ash and we are not ash. And we are heavy and we are light. Trying to be both. Windows wide, listening to dishes and glasses down below, just as we did the night we first met, just as we did when your hair was less ash and my mind less grey. These matterless things that matter to us. I ask you if you remember moving in. What I mean to say is, would you do this again? You put out your cigarette. And sit down beside me. We only happen once.

THESE
MATTERLESS
THINGS